

FEBRUARY 2004 IRP E-NEWS

Brought to You by the Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP)

The IRP mission is to join diverse public and private resources in innovative collaborations to strengthen communities and improve life in rural Idaho.

IRP Board to Meet - The next quarterly meeting of the IRP Board of Directors will be held on **Tuesday, February 10** from 7:30 am until 11:30 am. The meeting will be held in the Joe R. Williams Basement Conference Room at 700 West Jefferson Street in Boise. For a detailed agenda go to www.irp.idaho.gov and click on 'Calendar'.

IRP Committee Meetings – Thanks to the tremendous effort and input from numerous volunteers we're in full swing with a number of IRP committee meetings. Upcoming meetings include: February 12 - **IRP Economic Development** Committee Meeting, 2 – 4 pm with conference call participation available; USDA State Office, 9173 West Barnes at the Black Eagle Center in the Blue Heron Building (near Overland & Maple Grove), Boise; March 30 - **IRP Leadership & Education/Workforce Development** Joint Committee Meeting; and April 16 - **IRP Environment** Committee Meeting. For more information or to volunteer for one of the IRP committees please go to www.irp.idaho.gov.

Rural Development Field Hearing – Sen. Mike Crapo will be holding a field hearing of the Senate Agriculture Committee on rural development issues. The hearing is tentatively scheduled for March 16th in Cascade but is subject to change due to the legislative calendar. IRP thanks Sen. Crapo for his efforts to draw attention to rural Idaho issues and encourages people to participate. For information and final details contact Bob Ford at 208/334-1776 or bob_ford@crapo.senate.gov.

IDOC Rural Forums - You are cordially invited to join the Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC), Gem Teams, and other rural development partners for the second annual regional Rural Development Partner Forums. These day long meetings will cover a variety of topics including a "sharing forum" where by the participating communities share their concerns, challenges, and successes. Each session will begin at 8:30 am and finish by 4:30 pm. The dates and locations of the workshops are as follows - February 18 - Vendome, Weiser; March 4 - Civic Gymnasium, Rupert; March 17 - Dworshak State Park, Orofino; April 7 - Senior Center, Rathdrum; April 29 - Iona Community Center; and May 12 - Enders Hotel, Soda Springs. For a detailed agenda and registration form go to <http://www.idoc.state.id.us/idcomm/comdev/technical.html>. Please note that a \$10 pre-registration check must be sent to IDOC at least one week prior to the session you would like to attend.

Best Practices for Small Communities - In spring 2003, the National Center for Small Communities (NCSC) launched the Grassroots Rural Entrepreneurship Award, to honor elected officials of small communities (under 10,000 in population) who have been exemplary leaders in crafting effective entrepreneurial development strategies. By recognizing these communities, NCSC hopes not only to publicize some excellent work, but to also spread the word about how other towns can get started on their own efforts to nurture homegrown ventures. Lessons learned through the GREA program are now showcased in Grassroots Rural Entrepreneurship: best practices for small communities and entrepreneurial development. You can view and print this free booklet off the NCSC Web site at www.smallcommunities.org.

Home Health Care Grants - U.S. Senator Larry Craig, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging is encouraging those in rural America to consider applying for new grants available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USDA pre-development grants will assist cooperatives with providing outreach to home-based health care providers and assessing local-level human service provider needs. The grants are available to qualified public bodies or nonprofit-based community development organizations. The revolving loan grants made available through the USDA will assist in the funding and administering of a revolving loan program to provide start-up and operating funds to newly created home-based health care cooperatives. Those monies will be made available to qualified public or nonprofit intermediary organizations (including tribes) proposing to carry out a program of financial and technical assistance. Recipients are required to obtain matching funds, doubling the value of the USDA grants. Eligible applicants must be located in rural areas with populations of 50,000 or less. Funding of selected applicants will be contingent upon meeting the conditions of the grant agreement. The deadline for submission of grant applications is **February 13**. Detailed information about grant requirements and information on how to apply is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

Info about Rural Idaho Available – ‘Rural Idaho at a Glance’ provides an overview of economic and demographic changes in Idaho since 1990. The intended audience for this color brochure includes elected representatives; state, local and nonprofit agency staff, and business people who serve rural markets. Copies cost \$2 each plus \$1.65 for tax, postage and handling. Order from UI Ag Publications, P.O. Box 442240, Moscow, ID 83844-2240; phone 208/885-7982; fax 208/885-4648.

Arts and Rural Community Assistance Initiative - The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Forest Service (FS) have announced the sixth round of their Arts and Rural Community Assistance Initiative. This special grant program supports arts-based rural community development projects eligible under the FS Economic Action Program (EAP) guidelines. The funding level for the program in 2004 will only allow for participation in 10 mountain and Midwest states including Idaho. The purpose of these grants is to help grantees demonstrate the importance and value of the arts in rural economic diversification and cultural resource conservation in forest and/or natural resource dependent areas. Through shared projects, this partnership has improved federal and state efforts to support sustainable, community-based activities. All Rural Community Assistance Initiative applications are to be filled out and submitted via the Internet using WESTAF's online grant system. Application Deadline: **March 1**, 2004. To apply for a grant, or for more information, click here: <http://arcai.cgweb.org/>. Please contact Shannon E. Daut with any questions or comments at 303/629-1166.

Building a Sustainable Business - A Guide to Developing a Business Plan for Farms and Rural Businesses brings the business planning process alive to help today's alternative and sustainable agriculture entrepreneurs transform farm-grown inspiration into profitable enterprises. Sample worksheets illustrate how real farm families set goals, determined potential markets and evaluated financing options - and help the reader develop a detailed business plan. To order Building a Sustainable Business, send \$14 plus \$3.95 for shipping/handling to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, 210 Hills Building, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082. Credit card and discounted volume orders may be placed by calling 802/656-0484. Preview it online at <http://www.sare.org/publications>.

Tips & Tricks Available – The Idaho Department of Commerce is now distributing a weekly bulletin of grant writing and project development tips for government, non-profits, faith based organizations or just anyone interested in preparing successful grant proposals. Weekly topics so far have included project scoping, project descriptions and researching funding sources. If you have a tip to share or would like to join this list please send an email to jmiller@idoc.state.id.us.

Scholarships for Hispanic Students - The Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) mission is to double the rate of Hispanics earning a college degree. Since 1975, HSF has awarded more than 61,000 scholarships in excess of \$115 million to Hispanic students from all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands who have attended more than 1,700 colleges and universities. For application details and more information go to <http://www.hsf.net/>.

Scholarships for Young Women Entrepreneurs - The Guardian Life Insurance Company's annual initiative designed to help women create, invest and protect wealth by rewarding the enterprising spirits of girls ages 12 to 16. Guardian awards college scholarships to 15 girls who demonstrate budding entrepreneurship; are taking the first steps toward financial independence; and make a difference in their school and communities. For details go to <http://www.glic.com/wc/frameset.html?http://www.glic.com/wc/ggp.html>.

Northwest Regional Summit on Youth – This event sponsored by the Lewis-Clark Coalition for Families and Youth, will be held in Lewiston, Idaho on **April 8 and 9** from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm with a third day to be held in interested individual communities. This conference will allow participants the opportunity to learn about critical prevention issues on both a national and local scale and then take action in their communities. Those who participate in the conference will be better informed about best practices and be able to use this strategy to develop and follow-through with strategic plans for their communities. Additionally, there will be increased involvement by teens in planning and implementing best practice strategies in their communities. Organizations will have an opportunity to highlight their efforts by entering a display in the two-day resource fair. Registration for the Northwest Regional Summit on Youth is \$50. Scholarships are available. For additional conference and registration information please visit www.communitycollaboration.net/nwrsy.htm or contact the Department of Health and Welfare Region 2 Director's Office at 208/799-4338 or behlerk@idhw.state.id.us.

Ag Risk Management Funds - The Western Center for Risk Management Education (Western Center) announces an opportunity for applicants in Idaho and other western States to receive funds to support projects that will train agricultural producers and their families to use improved risk management practices. Applications are encouraged from any private or public group, organization, or institution with a demonstrated capacity to develop and carry out educational programs for agricultural producers and their families. Risk management education is training that improves the ability of agricultural producers and their families to effectively manage the financial risks associated with farming and ranching businesses. Funding is available for projects that run from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005. Pre-proposals are due by 5 PM Pacific Standard Time on **February 18, 2004**. The Request For Applications (RFA) and information about the online application process are available on the Western Center's web site: <http://WestRME.wsu.edu>. Materials are available at <http://WestRME.wsu.edu> or by calling 509/477-2168.